



National Prescription Drug Take Back Day

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WHY IT MATTERS

National Take Back Day provides a safe, anonymous way to dispose of unused or expired medications—protecting families, preventing addiction, and saving lives. In October 2024 alone, **629,953 lbs (314**

tons) of medications were collected nationwide, bringing the total since 2010 to nearly **9,600 tons** (DEA.gov).

DID YOU KNOW?

The opioid crisis continues to threaten communities. In Virginia, overdose deaths involving fentanyl have surged—1,951 Virginians died in 2022, a 20-fold increase since 2013 ([Virginia Department of Emergency Management](#)). **More than half of local street pills contain a deadly dose of fentanyl. As of 2023, 7 in 10 counterfeit pills in the U.S. contain enough fentanyl to cause a fatal overdose.**

Unused or expired medications left in homes can be misused, accidentally ingested, or become a gateway to addiction. By participating in Take Back Day, we reduce access to these substances and help prevent preventable overdoses.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

PARTICIPATE IN NATIONAL TAKE BACK DAY

- **Find a Collection Site Near You:** Visit the DEA's [National Take Back Day website](#)
- **Drop Off Unused Medications:** Bring your unused or expired prescription medications to the designated site on **October 25, 2025, between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.**
- **Year-Round Disposal:** Many pharmacies, hospitals, and law enforcement agencies offer permanent drop-off options if you miss the event.

EXPLORE PAIN MANAGEMENT OPTIONS

Understanding and managing pain effectively is crucial. While opioids may be prescribed for pain relief, they carry risks of addiction and overdose. Consider safe, non-narcotic alternatives:

- **Consult with an Interventional Pain Management Physician** – For chronic or severe pain, seek a certified interventional pain management physician to explore treatments and individualized care plans. Find a qualified specialist in Virginia via the [Virginia Society of Interventional Pain Physicians](#) directory.
- **Consult a Dental or Oral Health Provider:** Some pain, particularly jaw, tooth, or oral-related pain, can be addressed by a licensed dentist or oral health professional. Find a qualified provider in Virginia via the [Virginia Dental Association](#) and [ADA Find-a-Dentist](#).
- **Use Nonsteroidal Anti-Inflammatory Drugs (NSAIDs):** Effective for acute pain and inflammation.
- **Engage in Physical Therapy:** Helps in managing chronic pain through exercises and techniques. Ask your physician for a referral to a licensed physical therapist, or find resources via the [American Physical Therapy Association](#).
- **Explore Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT):** A psychological approach to managing chronic pain. Ask your doctor for a referral to a licensed therapist trained in CBT, or explore programs through the [Virginia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Sciences](#).
- **Utilize Mindfulness and Relaxation Techniques:** Aid in reducing pain perception and improving quality of life. Ask your healthcare provider for guidance on programs, or access evidence-based resources through apps like [Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction](#) (MBSR).
- **Do NOT share prescription medications** – Sharing opioids or other prescription drugs can lead to accidental overdose, addiction, or exposure to illegally laced substances such as fentanyl. **Even half a fentanyl-laced pill can be fatal (just a few salt-sized grains).** Fentanyl is mixed unevenly into drugs; an overdose can happen in an instant. Always obtain medications through a licensed healthcare provider and follow the prescribed dosage and duration.

For more information on chronic pain self-management, visit the [Virginia Department of Health's Chronic Pain Self-Management Program](#).

ACCESS ADDICTION SUPPORT SERVICES

If you or someone you know is struggling with substance use, several resources are available in Virginia:

- **Community Services Boards (CSBs):** Provide treatment for mental health issues, substance use, and addiction. Find your local CSB at [Virginia DBHDS](#)
- **REACH:** A statewide program offering support for individuals with substance use disorders. Learn more at [REACH Virginia](#)
- **SAMHSA National Helpline:** 1-800-662-HELP (4357) – A confidential, free, 24/7 helpline for individuals and families facing mental and/or substance use disorders.

THE IMPACT OF YOUR PARTICIPATION

By participating in National Take Back Day, you contribute to:

- **Preventing Overdose Deaths:** Proper disposal minimizes the chances of medications being misused.
- **Protecting the Environment:** Prevents pharmaceutical pollutants from entering water systems.
- **Promoting Community Health:** Supports efforts to decrease preventable overdose deaths and substance use disorders.

HOW TO SPOT AN OVERDOSE

- Unable to wake up
- Slow or no breathing
- Heavy gurgling or snoring sounds
- Blue, gray, or purple skin, lips, or nails
- Cold or clammy skin

Carrying naloxone is a small but powerful action to help save a life. Fairfax County offers [free online training](#) about fentanyl and naloxone. After completing it, you are eligible to request free naloxone!

